



# Libya Conflict Insight

## Situation analysis

Libya achieved independence from United Nations (UN) trusteeship in 1951 as an amalgamation of three former Ottoman provinces, Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan under the rule of King Mohammed Idris. In 1969, King Idris was deposed in a coup staged by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. He promptly abolished the monarchy, revoked the constitution, and established the Libya Arab Republic. By 1977, the Republic was transformed into the leftist-leaning Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. In the 1970s and 1980s, Libya pursued a "deviant foreign policy", epitomized by its radical belligerence towards the West and its endorsement of anti-imperialism. In the late 1990s, Libya began to re-normalize its relations with the West, a development that gradually led to its rehabilitation from the status of a pariah, or a "rogue state." As part of its *rapprochement* with the West, Libya abandoned its nuclear weapons programme in 2003, resulting in the lifting of UN sanctions.

Economically, Libya relies on oil and gas, with 80% of its reserves located in Sirte. Owing to the breakout of civil war in 2011, there has been a decrease in oil production from 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) in the pre-conflict era to less than 792,000 bpd as of May 2017.

### ABOUT THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide analysis and recommendations to assist the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States and Development Partners in decision making and in the implementation of peace and security-related instruments.

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POPULATION	GDP PER CAPITA (PPP)	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (YEARS)	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)	NEIGHBOURS	RECS
6.3 million	\$13,321	71.8	Index: 0.716 Rank: 102/188	Algeria Chad Egypt Niger Tunisia Sudan	COMESA CEN-SAD UMA

Figure 1: Country profile and demographics<sup>i</sup>

In 2010, the UN Human Development Report ranked Libya as the 53<sup>rd</sup> most advanced country in the world and the most advanced in Africa in terms of the Human Development Index. Despite these economic and social gains, 2010 ushered in a new geopolitical era across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Beginning in Tunisia in December 2010, a series of popular protests commonly referred to as the “Arab Spring”, shook the long-ruling autocratic regimes throughout the MENA region. In Libya, demonstrations began in February 2011 and, with the help of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Gaddafi regime was dismantled following his death in October 2011. However, the euphoria following the NATO-led military intervention and the end of the regime was short-lived, as the country quickly descended into a major civil war; the First Libyan Civil War from February-October 2011, followed by the Second Libyan Civil War from 2014 to date.

UN-mediated peace talks have been underway to arbitrate peace negotiations between divergent factions, but the peace process continues to stall and no settlements have been reached so far. Despite this lull, parliamentary and presidential elections are anticipated towards the end of 2018.

## Causes of the conflict

### Autocracy

During his 42-year reign, Gaddafi de-institutionalized the Libyan state and prevented the country from establishing a modern democratic dispensation. Although Gaddafi claimed his administration was based on popular will, he ruled without any formal constitution, deliberately decimated independent media and civil society and prohibited the establishment of political parties. Furthermore, he consistently resorted to a “stick and carrot” approach to consolidate his rule such that groups that were loyal to him profited from material and plum

privileges while the opposition faced routine clampdowns. Gaddafi’s patronage strategy soon resulted in the marginalization of many groups, including those in the eastern part of the country where most of the oil resources are located. The de-institutionalization of the political system coupled with Gaddafi’s intolerance of opposition, real or perceived, presented a time-bomb waiting to explode in due course.

### Weak and unprofessional security sector

Under Gaddafi, the security sector was run in the form of an intricate network of security and intelligence forces focused primarily on safeguarding the regime and preventing crime. Gaddafi deliberately weakened the army in order to prevent the emergence of any ambitious groups keen on thwarting his regime, while strengthening militias from the Qadhahfah, Maqariha and Warfalla tribes that had sworn allegiance to him. Because appointments to top positions within the armed forces and government were based on tribal networks as opposed to qualifications and competences, the army in particular could not sustain adequate morale and management. Thus, in contrast with Tunisia and Egypt where the security sector played a pivotal mediating role during the popular uprisings and consequent transitional periods, Libya virtually disintegrated and gave way to the emergence of rival militias locked in armed contestation between and among themselves, and against the embattled central government in Tripoli.

### Religious extremism

Religious extremism in Libya dates back to the 1970s with the formation of a handful of jihadist cells in the eastern part of the country. The return of an estimated 800-1,000 Libyan volunteers that participated in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan during the 1980s also fuelled religious extremism. When the jihadist mercenaries returned home in the 1990s, they established the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), which was brutally crushed by the government in 1998. Some of its members managed to flee Libya and join forces with the global al-

<sup>i</sup> Source: Human Development Report, UNDP. 2016.

Qaeda franchise during the American led-invasion of Iraq in 2003. However, many within the rank-and-file of the LIFG were also co-opted by Gaddafi's government through Saif Al-Islam's<sup>ii</sup> "reform and repent programme" in 2007. The LIFG brought a wealth of paramilitary experiences to Libyan revolutionaries in 2011 and further created a robust infrastructure for terrorism to thrive.

## Triggering of protests

The immediate triggers of the protests that erupted in 2011 across three Libyan cities, Benghazi, Bani Walid and Darnah, were the extended delays in the construction of government housing, lack of basic services and widespread political corruption. These protests soon transformed into anti-government demonstrations as citizens drew inspiration from popular and successful protests in Tunisia and Egypt to demand the removal of Gaddafi. The protests were met with massive clampdowns and repressions by police and security forces, to which opposition leaders retaliated by declaring a "Day of Rage" on 17 February 2011. The amount of violence used against protesters sparked outrage amongst Libyan citizens and by 25 February 2011, the UN Security Council (UNSC) had imposed sanctions on the country including an arms embargo, asset freezes and travel bans on Gaddafi and his associates. Less than one month after, on 19 March, NATO started bombing Libya despite the express will of the African Union (AU), which rejected any form of foreign intervention and instead proposed a mediation mandate derived from both its Constitutive Act and the UN Charter. In August, Western bombing of government bases surrounding Tripoli opened a window of opportunity for militants to overrun the capital, Tripoli. Gaddafi was killed in October following a fierce standoff in his hometown of Sirte. Following his downfall, the centre could no longer hold and the country quickly descended into a seething conflict zone.

## Actors of the conflict

The Libyan conflict embodies a complex web of actors with fragmented but also extreme interests. The first set of actors consists of the three rival governing bodies, namely the General National Congress (GNC), the House of Representatives (HoR) and the Government of National Accord (GNA).

## General National Congress (GNC)

The GNC, dominated by the Justice and Construction Party (the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood party), came to power following general elections held in July 2012. It refused to step down after its electoral mandate expired in February 2014. The GNC advocates for a total break from the Gaddafi era, including purging the country's political system and institutions from the legacies of the past government. In this regard, for instance, it enacted the 2013 Political Isolation Law which sought to prevent those who served in the previous government between 1 September 1969 and 20 October 2011 from holding office for 10 years.

In terms of capacity, the GNC is supported by Libya Dawn, a military coalition consisting of Tripoli-based Islamist militias, Misrata-based militias, Berber armed factions, and the Knights of Janzour militia. The GNC and its military wing, Libya Dawn, also receive military assistance from regional powers like Turkey and Qatar. Particularly since April 2016, experts have classified the GNC as one of the weakest political blocs in comparison to the other three dominant factions in the country (HoR, GNA and terrorist and insurgency groups).

## House of Representatives (HoR)

The HoR, also known as the Council of Deputies, is a political bloc mostly consisting of independent candidates that see themselves as secular and nationalist in political orientation. It formally established its base in the eastern city of Tobruk after it was dislodged from Tripoli by Libya Dawn in August 2014. The HoR is more receptive to institutional continuity between the old and new Libya. Significantly, it controls key oil terminals by virtue of the military support it receives from Dignity, a coalition of the remnants of the Libyan National Army (LNA) and militias such as the Zintani brigades. In March 2015, General Khalifa Haftar<sup>iii</sup> was confirmed as Commander of HoR forces. At the regional level, the HoR enjoys the military backing of Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, and also broader international support from Russia and France. Until January 2016, the group was known to have received assistance from the European Union (EU) and the United States.

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<sup>ii</sup> Saif Al-Islam is the son of Muammar Gaddafi and was captured in the Sahara by Zintan militias following the 2011 uprising. He was released in 2017, despite the Libyan court sentencing him to death, in absentia, in 2015.

<sup>iii</sup> Haftar was a field marshal during Gaddafi's regime, but was disowned in the 1980s, which led him to devote the next two decades towards toppling the Libyan leader from exile in the USA. Upon the 2011 uprising, he returned to Libya to command the rebel force in the east.

## Government of National Accord (GNA)

Under the leadership of Fayez al Sarraj, the GNA was formed in January 2016 following the UN-mediated Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) signed the previous month in Skhirat, Morocco. The LPA was projected to substantially decrease internal disputes within Libya, and to gradually establish a unified and coherent government. The Libyan institutions under the LPA are as follows: the Presidential Council, the GNA (executive branch), the HoR (legislative branch) and the State Council - with the latter assigned a consultative role. The UNSC recognizes the Tripoli-based GNA as the sole legitimate government of Libya. The GNA currently runs the country's coast guard and has signed an agreement with the EU to train personnel to curb irregular migration in the Mediterranean. In addition to international recognition, the GNA is backed by a faction of the militia group, Misrata. However, in spite of the LPA, the GNA has failed to gain endorsement from the HoR due to disputes regarding control of the security apparatus and the

institutional design of the new Libya as provided in the LPA. The GNA currently exercises minimal control on the capital city and on the Libyan territory as a whole.

## Terrorist and insurgency groups

Different terrorist and insurgency groups such as the Islamic State in Libya (ISL), the dissolved Ansar al-Sharia in Libya (ASL), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and its affiliates are involved in the Libyan conflict. Beginning in late 2014, ISL took advantage of the prevailing political chaos in the country to seize territories in Sabratha, Derna and Sirte. The establishment of an IS branch in Libya in 2014 was the project of the Battar Brigade, which had taken part in the Syrian civil war. After briefly controlling Derna, ISL was uprooted by the Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna in June 2015, and later established its capital in Sirte. In December 2017, ISL lost control of this city in an offensive led by Misrata brigades and backed by US airstrikes, following almost six months of fighting.

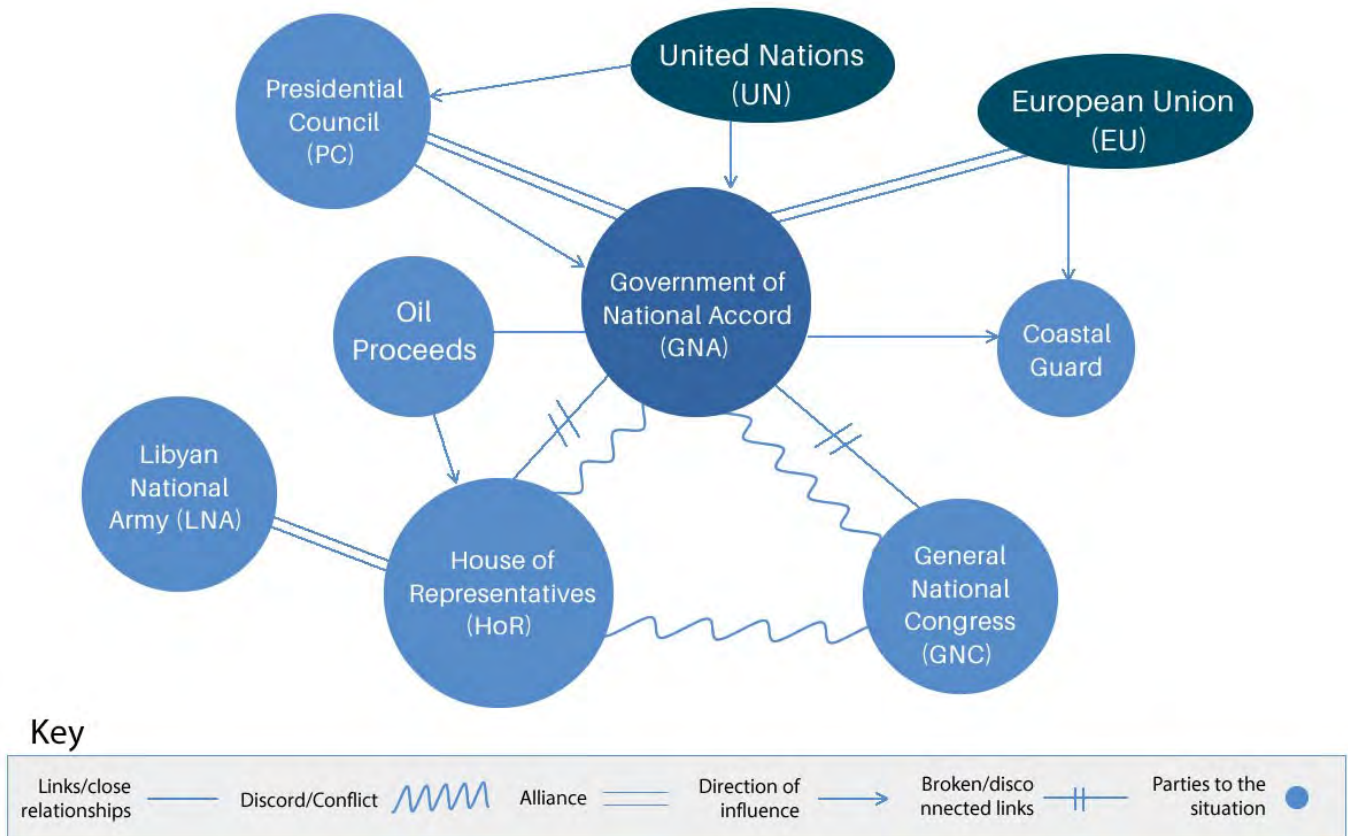


Figure 2: Actors mapping



ASL also announced its dissolution in May 2017 after the decimation of its leaders and fighters by LNA forces in Benghazi. Its main bases were in Benghazi, Derna and Sirte. The ASL-ISL relationship was ambivalent given ISL's opposition to any group of Islamic fighters who do not recognize the authority of the IS leader, al-Baghdadi. The ASL relied on violence and on religious proselytization to 'win the hearts' of the local population and expand its brand of extremist networks.

Apart from its deep commitment to Jihad, AQIM's strategy is considerably strengthened by the movement's vast business networks and economic interests. AQIM has therefore exploited the crisis in the country to fortify its presence in the southwest of Libya, particularly the area of Fezzan, which provides the group with a safe haven and a logistical base to facilitate its operations and trafficking routes in the neighbouring Sahel region.

## Conflict dynamics

The 2011 popular uprising (also known as the Libyan Revolution or the First Libyan Civil War) floundered because it lacked strong political leadership, or a unifying political ideology, except for the loose and opportunistic quest to overthrow the Gaddafi regime. The NATO-led military intervention that eventually resulted in a regime change was also not accompanied by any tangible post-Gaddafi strategy. Consequently, the fledgling central government was unable to disarm and demobilize the many powerful militias that took centre-stage following the intervention, making the formation of a national unity government the principal challenge for the country to date. Comprising of forces opposed to Gaddafi and his Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the National Transitional Council (NTC) became the de facto government exercising governance in the country for a period of 10 months after the end of the war. The NTC presided over Libya's first democratic elections on 7 July 2012, and subsequently transferred power to the newly elected GNC. Although the election revived popular support for the revolution, the GNC was unable to produce a constitution that could stem the decline of the security situation and unify Libya. Having failed to draft a new constitution with a broadly accepted power sharing arrangement as well as checks and balances, Libya disintegrated into many more different factions that inexorably led to the outbreak of a second civil war in 2014.

In February 2014, Khalifa Haftar, leader of the rebel force in the east and the HoR, called for the dissolution of the GNC and demanded the establishment of a government

committee to administer new elections. The central government ignored these demands and Haftar forcibly attempted to establish himself as the commander-in-chief in an operation called 'Dignity'. Between May and June, numerous pro-Dignity marches were held throughout the country. When elections finally took place in June 2014, it was marked by a significantly low voter turnout of 18%, down from 60% in 2012, even though HoR eventually won. Reluctant to admit defeat in the parliamentary elections, political Islamists such as the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood and hard-line militias from Misrata and their regional allies, launched Operation Dawn in response to HoR's victory and Haftar's Dignity campaign. The Operation culminated in six weeks of concerted assaults on Tripoli that forced the newly elected parliament (HoR) to relocate to Tobruk, in the east of the country.

Against this background and impasse created by the existence of two parallel governments, in Tripoli (GNC) and Tobruk (HoR), the UN initiated peace talks in September 2014 to form a national unity government. On 17 December 2015, the UN mediated a peace deal in Skhirat, Morocco, which led to the formation of the Government of National Accord (GNA) as an interim government starting from January 2016. In March 2016, a Presidential Council (PC) based in Tripoli and headed by Fayeze al-Sarraj was also established to preside over the GNA. According to the agreement, the GNA committed to endorse the Tobruk-based HoR but the latter did not meet its own part of the bargain because it rejected the list of ministers on two occasions; on 25 January and 22 August 2016. This stalemate, in turn, made it difficult for the PC and the GNA under Prime Minister al-Sarraj to establish legitimacy.

Although informal agreements had been underway between Sarraj and Haftar, such as the Abu Dhabi Agreement of May 2016, only miniscule progress has been made to achieve the expectations of the peace process. Details of the agreement between them have not been disclosed, although the two released a joint declaration committing to stop fighting and to take part in the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2018. Three unsuccessful rounds of UN-mediated talks also took place in Tunis in October 2017, aimed at negotiating certain amendments; including one on a referendum for the new constitution and the other on the 2018 elections. Although the UN still affirms that the agreement is legitimate until a new one is signed, the world body brokered the December 2015 agreement establishing the GNA for a one-year period, renewable only once. Currently, it is deemed that Libya will continue to have two governments for the upcoming months, at

least until fresh elections are held in 2018. Libya's election commission has recently announced that a total of 1,965,450 people have so far registered to vote, a considerable improvement in number when compared with the turnout for the 2014 elections, which numbered only 630,000.

On the humanitarian level, the civil war in Libya has created a dire and complex situation, in which the civilian population continues to bear the heaviest brunt. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the civil war are estimated at 241,193 people and another 1.3 million people require assorted humanitarian assistance. The crisis has also become lucrative for human traffickers as they exploit the country's state of lawlessness to smuggle and traffic African migrants across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. In 2016, nearly 4,220 migrants lost their lives in the Mediterranean waters during the typically perilous journey to Europe. Since the beginning of 2017, 94,000 migrants and refugees have crossed the Mediterranean, with at least 2,221 losing their lives in the process. Both the EU and the United States, having pledged support to the UN-backed GNA in December 2017, have supported Sarraj's GNA and the coast guard. Italy, the main destination for refugees crossing the Mediterranean, also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Libya's GNA in 2017, with promises to support the Libyan navy and coast guard to intercept migrant boats and detention centres for migrants. However, these multilateral engagements as well as bilateral ones such as the Italy-Libya memorandum put the brunt of the responsibility on Libya, without making any reference to Libya's international legal obligations in terms of refugee protection. It is not surprising that human rights violations and brutality against migrants in Libya have not been solved by these bilateral and multilateral initiatives between the GNA and the West.

As the civil war rages, two main trends are clearly evident. The first trend is the growing atomization and militarization of the political system with new centres of power emerging and competing for resources and political influence. Secondly, the country has witnessed the shrinking of the formal security apparatus and a corresponding reign of the militias. The politicization of tribal militia groups provide the different political actors with an opportunity to apply pressure on the government and each other or even to act as spoilers in the peace negotiations.

## Scenarios

### Best case scenario

The best case scenario may be a successful political transition with the two rival governments of HoR and GNA joining hands to meet the requirements of the UN-brokered LPA. There is no gainsaying that a unified government, rather than one that is splintered and administered from two or more locations, is crucial to rebuilding Libyan state institutions. A government of national unity will also provide the necessary minimum conditions to put the country back on the path to a peaceful and democratic process in the build-up to and after the upcoming 2018 elections. This would, of course, require the HoR and the GNA to agree on the guidelines for a referendum on a new constitution and on the electoral procedures. At the diplomatic level, the Abu Dhabi Agreement between the two main protagonists may usher in a new push for the stabilization of the country if it is well resourced, coordinated and sustained by the UN.

### Worst case scenario

This scenario would mean that Libya continues to witness an escalation of violence as different parties lock horns trying to secure more territory and exercise control over lucrative oil refineries as well as key infrastructures like the Central Bank of Libya and the National Oil Company. As long as Haftar's role in the future of Libya is not properly defined, it is possible that the HoR might not accept the conduct of elections in its power base in eastern Libya. Such an environment of instability without political and national reconciliation could have disastrous effects, including the outbreak of yet another civil war that could further militarize and atomize the political system. This scenario is also likely should further regional military support be provided to the different armed groups; especially in the absence of constructive engagement by Russia and the United States, acting solo or within the UNSC. This continued fragmentation of the country will have disastrous geopolitical consequences for the entire North Africa, the Sahel, the Arab world and southern Europe, to some extent.

### Most likely scenario

The most likely scenario is the continuation, and intensification, of cyclical conflict; one in which the country experiences a spate of insecurity and fragile peace, without necessarily descending into full-scale civil war. The HoR might view the UN and EU support to the GNA as an attempt to undermine its legitimacy, forcing

it to escalate the crisis. This is especially likely given that Haftar's faction no longer assumes ties to the UN-backed LPA agreement whose term ended in December 2017, according to the HoR. It is probable that no compromises will be reached regarding the proposed electoral procedure and the referendum on a new constitution before the election date arrives, and this could further create tension within the polity. As a consequence, the HoR and the GNA will likely continue to wield power in their respective bases in the east and in the capital in a manner that constrains the conduct of free and fair elections. Both sides, especially the GNA, may view violence as a form of leverage in the political process led by the UN, given that the HoR has managed to garner support, overtly or covertly, from countries such as Egypt, UAE and Russia. Other terrorist groups will likely continue to act as spoilers without any clear-cut interest in the stabilization of Libya.

## Current response assessment

The AU has made significant diplomatic efforts towards a political settlement in Libya, although its initiatives have routinely been met with stiff resistance from key countries such as Britain, France and the United States as well as from the National Transitional Council through the UNSC. Following the uprising in 2011, the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) formed an Ad-Hoc High-Level Committee (AUHLC) on Libya in March, made up of five Heads of State and Government and the Chairperson of the Commission, and adopted a "Roadmap" for Libya. The roadmap was however stalled by the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1973, which imposed a no-fly zone and endorsed the NATO intervention. As the conflict in Libya reached a deadlock, Western powers further pressured the AU to recognize the interim NTC as the only and legitimate representative of the Libyan government, which the PSC reluctantly - but finally - did in October 2011.

Since the outbreak of the civil war, however, the AU has committed itself to fostering an inclusive political dialogue to solve the conflict through the AU High-Level Committee on Libya and its High Representative for Libya, former Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, in coordination with the three members of the Quartet, namely the League of Arab states, the EU and the UN. The Quartet is meant to encourage national reconciliation, advance political dialogue and facilitate the implementation of the LPA. The AU PSC has also

welcomed the UN-mediated establishment of the Presidential Council of the GNA and has shown support for the AU initiative to convene a Libyan national dialogue.

## Strategic options

### To the African Union

- ❖ In addition to standard observation missions, the AU, along with international actors such as the UN and the Quartet, needs to dispatch a long-term observation mission to assess the political situation in Libya before, during and after the elections. Such pre-emptive engagement will prompt deterrent action against any security and logistical obstacles that could hinder the process of free and fair elections.
- ❖ The AU should adopt a common and clear strategy on Libya, and work in concert with the UN to reach a consensual and inclusive peace deal. This will avoid parallel diplomatic efforts, given that any fragmentation of the diplomatic response may weaken the UN-led peace process. The Joint UN-AU Framework established in April 2017 for Enhancing Partnership on Peace and Security is a step forward in fulfilling the AU's Peace and Security Protocol and should play a pivotal role in strengthening alliances and overcoming divisions.
- ❖ Furthermore, the AU should activate mediation efforts through the International Contact Group for Libya (ICG-L) co-headed by the AU and the AU-chaired Quartet.<sup>iv</sup> While the establishment of these mechanisms is already a partial success, the international and regional dispositions of neighbouring countries on the Libyan crisis is still divisive such that more needs to be done to harmonize the diverging positions of the important actors.
- ❖ The AU should initiate the launching of robust Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes with the support of the UN and international stakeholders, followed by the reformation and transformation of the security sector.<sup>v</sup> Given the disruptive capacities of the various militia groups, a commission that oversees and monitors the implementation of DDR programmes needs to be established.

<sup>iv</sup> This is in line with Article 6 of the PSC Protocol, which assigns the PSC with the function of peace-making, mediation, conciliation and enquiry.

<sup>v</sup> This is pursuant to Article 14 of the PSC Protocol, which assigns the PSC to assist in the institutional capacity for peacebuilding during and at the end of hostilities.

## To the national government

❖ The national government should negotiate with the HoR on the urgent imperative for an inclusive transitional government, placing premium on issues such as national reconciliation and the restoration of basic social services for the civilian population. Specifically, there needs to be dialogue regarding the future role of Haftar (which currently remains contentious), particularly in consideration of the upcoming elections. Consequently, a compromise regarding the set-up of the GNA in the LPA also needs to be renegotiated between the conflicting parties. The national government should use the

platforms and peace efforts already provided by the AU/UN to increase the possibility of a compromise.

❖ The government should also reach out to the militia and stem the tide of irredeemable collapse of the Libyan security sector, and pay critical attention to the resettlement and reintegration of refugees and IDPs. This could be implemented with the provision of the AU,<sup>vi</sup> which should support the Libyan government to kick-start and implement successful DDR programmes.

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<sup>vi</sup> This is pursuant to Article 14 of the PSC Protocol.



## Libya Conflict Timeline: 1951-2017

<b>1951</b>	Libya achieves independence from Italy.
<b>1969</b>	King Idris is ousted in a coup led by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.
<b>1975</b>	Libya occupies the Aouzou strip, an area of northern Chad adjacent to the southern Libyan border.
<b>1980</b>	Libya intervenes in a civil war in northern Chad to back President Goukouni Oueddei against the French-backed forces of Hisssein Habré.
<b>1986</b>	The US bombs Libyan military facilities in Tripoli and Benghazi over the alleged involvement of Libya in bombing a nightclub in West Berlin which led to the deaths of US military personnel.
<b>1988</b>	An airliner is blown up over the Scottish town of Lockerbie allegedly by Libyan agents.
<b>1990</b>	Chad and Libya decide to go before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over the Aouzou strip. ICJ rules in favour of Chad in 1994.
<b>1992</b>	The UN imposes sanctions on Libya in line with the suspected involvement of Libyans in the Lockerbie bombing.
<b>2003</b>	The UN Security Council lifts sanctions against Libya after the Lockerbie bombing.
<b>2006</b>	The US restores full diplomatic relations with Libya.
<b>2011 February</b>	Violent protests break out in Benghazi and spread to other cities in the wake of the Arab Spring.
<b>2011 March</b>	The UN Security Council authorizes a no-fly zone over Libya led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
<b>2011 October</b>	Gaddafi is captured and killed in ambiguous circumstances. Following the death of Gaddafi, NATO ends operations in Libya on 31 October 2011.
<b>2012 July</b>	The General National Congress (GNC) is elected in a popular vote and handed power by the National Transitional Council (NTC) in August 2012.
<b>2012 October</b>	The GNC elects Ali Zeidan as prime minister.
<b>2014 February</b>	The GNC refuses to dissolve after its power expires.
<b>2014 March</b>	The GNC deposes Ali Zeidan and elects businessman Ahmed Maiteeq as prime minister.
<b>2014 May</b>	General Khalifa Haftar launches Operation Dignity against Islamist militias in Benghazi.
<b>2014 May</b>	Pro-Dignity forces storm the GNC building demanding the dissolution of the GNC.
<b>2014 June</b>	Prime Minister Maiteeq steps down following the Supreme Court's decision that his appointment is unlawful.
<b>2014 July</b>	UN staff pulls out from Libya given the deteriorating security situation.
<b>2014 August</b>	United Arab Emirates jets fly from military bases in Egypt to conduct airstrikes against Dawn forces in Tripoli.

<b>2014 August</b>	Operation Dawn forces mainly made up of Berber factions and Tripoli- and Misrata-based militias seize control of the Tripoli International Airport.
<b>2014 November</b>	The Libyan Supreme Court rules that the 25 June elections are unconstitutional and formally dissolves the House of Representatives (HoR), which ignores the ruling and continues operating in Tobruk.
<b>2014 November</b>	The HoR confirms its support for Operation Dignity for the first time.
<b>2015 January</b>	Libyan army and Tripoli-based militia declare a partial cessation of hostilities agreement in UN-mediated talks in Geneva.
<b>2015 February</b>	The Islamic State affiliates in Libya seize control of the town of Nawfaliyah in central Libya. The same day they release a video depicting the beheading of 21 Egyptian Copts.
<b>2015 December</b>	The HoR and GNC along with their respective governments, sign the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) in Skhirat, Morocco in a move to resolve their disputes.
<b>2016 January</b>	The UN declares a new interim government, the Government of National Accord (GNA), which the Tobruk and Tripoli parliaments refuse to recognize.
<b>2016 March</b>	The UN-backed government of GNA sails into Tripoli.
<b>2016 May</b>	The Unity government leads a military campaign to retake the town of Sirte from the occupation of the Islamic State group.
<b>2016 July</b>	The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 2298 providing for Libya's category 2 chemical weapons to be transferred and destroyed outside of the country.
<b>2016 September</b>	General Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) seizes key oil export terminals in the East.
<b>2 February 2017</b>	Italian Prime Minister Gentilono and Libyan counterpart Fayez-al Sarraj sign a Memorandum of Understanding to curb migration.
<b>2017 March</b>	General Haftar's forces regain control of two major oil ports of Ras Lanuf and Es Sider weeks after it was captured by the Benghazi Defence Brigades.
<b>2017 May</b>	General Haftar meets the head of the Presidential Council of Libya for talks in Abu Dhabi.
<b>2017 May</b>	The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court tells the UN Security Council in a briefing that she is considering launching an investigation into alleged migrant-related crimes.
<b>2017 May</b>	Following heavy fighting in Libya, Libya's Ansar al-sharia announces its dissolution in a communiqué.
<b>2017 December</b>	The UN moves to evacuate thousands of African migrants following disclosure of slave auctions outside of Tripoli.

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